ONE PENNY

Workers' Dreadnought

FOR GOING TO THE ROOT.

Vol. X. No. 49. February 23rd, 1924. WEEKLY.

TO ALL IN PRISON.

By H. SMITH.

A small green cage high on a passage wall
And a nightingale singing. . . . Singing
Till passers-by in the street pause
And peer, as through a triumphal arch
Erected to mark man's creation of hell upon earth
Through the mean rooms into the ash-strewn yard.
(Behind how many of our triumphal arches
Are there anything but ashes?)
And day long through the stench and squalor
The bird's song swells to heaven.

* * *

Why is the sky grown dark?
Why is there no more wind?
Why is everything like the hush before a storm?
If a storm were to come I should understand,
But all is so still.
Why do you live beneath a wooden sky?
Because I am in a cage must you be in a cage?
Do you enjoy being caged?
And if not, why do you cage me?
Can you not see that if I am bond you are still more in bondage?
Can you love freedom while I languish thus?
And if you do not love her how can you be free?
I have my revenge, not that I desire vengeance.
(All that I desire is a little space to fly in and my mate.)
As you oppress me so are you opprest,
As you mock me so the machine mocks you.
I do not know, the woods and fields are my place,
But it seems to me that while any creature is enslaved
There is not much hope for the rest.
While tyranny lives, it matters not who is tyrant.
There is no hope because you are hopeless,
And if you were fearless there would be nothing to fear.
Not that I am fearless.
But all I fear is that I shall not soon die.
I can hear the night wind in the beeches,
Like my mate singing,
Like a boy's pure voice in the twilight,
And the bars are up against my breast.
Do you hear? The bars are up against my breast,
And I am free with a freedom you will never understand.

* * *

And the bird sings on,
And the masters of the bird live on.
They hear the bird's song, but they do not understand it.
The day on which they understand it will be the end of a world.

DREADNOUGHT £1,000 FUND.

Brought forward, £185 6s. 11½d. Office collecting box, 1s. 1d.; L. Grant, 1s.; C. Hart, 3s. (monthly); E. M. Brett, 5s.; collection, New Morris Hall, 4s. 9½d.; D. Jewson, 5s.; S. Palmer, 1s. (monthly); I. A. Cahill, £1; Lewisham Labour Party, 10s.; donation, 9s. 5d.; total for fortnight, £3 0s. 3½d. Total, £188 7s. 3d.

Brought forward, £188 18s. 3d.; E. Wright, £2 10s.; J. Cook, 1s.; E. L. Johnson, 2s.; A.K.H., 10s.; H. White, 2s. 6d.; E. Hulley Rawlins, 30s.; Æ. Tollemache, £1; J. Clarke, 2s.; total for week, £5 17s. 6d. Total, £194 15s. 9d.

THE DOCK STRIKE.

By Sylvia Pankhurst.

Government Action: Which Side Will It Assist?

The Labour Government has officially announced that it will secure the transport of necessary food supplies during the dock strike; Mr. MacDonald's statement in reply to a Parliamentary question was as follows:—

"The Government will not fail to take what steps are necessary to secure the transport of necessary food supplies, and has already set up the nucleus of the organisation.

"May I express the hope, however, that nothing will be said, or asked, in this House to make difficult the only thing that really matters—a settlement of the dispute."

We do not think any docker will agree with Mr. MacDonald that the only thing which really matters is a settlement of the dispute. The dockers will naturally say the only settlement which matters is one that will improve their miserable position. The dockers are right to hold that view.

This brings us to another point: what sort of steps will the Government take to secure the food supplies and who will benefit by those steps?

Government Intervention to Benefit the Workers.

When the railway strike took place we pointed out that capitalist governments have been the friends of the employers and their intervention has always resulted in benefiting the employers. We urged that the Labour Government should show itself to be the friend of the workers, by taking over the railways and running them in the interests of the community until the employers were prepared to abandon the proposed wage reduction.

We observe that a mass meeting of Gloucester transport workers has now passed a resolution calling the Labour Government to use emergency powers to take over the ports and shipping and administer them, paying the wages increase demanded by the dockers.

The Labour Government might do this with some show of impartiality, because the dockers were granted 16s. a day by the Shaw award up to the end of 1924, but by agreement between the employers and the trade union the wage was reduced in accordance with the fall in the cost of living. Now that the cost of living has been rising for six months, it should be regarded as but fair, even by the capitalist mentality, that the dockers should get back something of what they surrendered from the award given to them by the Shaw Court of Inquiry.

We must declare plainly, however, that impartiality should not be expected of a Labour Government, nor, indeed, tolerated from it. One does not expect impartiality as between protection and free trade, from a Liberal Government, nor should anyone expect impartiality as between employers and employed from a Labour Government. The duty of a Labour Government is to act as the friend of the worker in all cases.

In the matter of legislation this Government cannot proceed without Liberal votes, but as long as it does not grossly defy the letter of the law it can take what administrative action it chooses. Of course, it could, and probably would, be brought to book by a vote of censure supported by both the other political parties. In that case it could call for a general election and go to the country on as fine an issue as it could get.

Government Intervention Which Helps Employers.

If the Government does not intervene definitely on the side of the workers, intervention by it to secure necessary food supplies will inevitably prove disadvantageous to the strikers.

The object of the strikers must necessarily be to paralyse transport. They are obliged, by the nature of the case, to aim at more than embarrassing their immediate employers. Because their employers are far stronger than they in staying power the strikers are bound to try to embarrass the whole community, in order that the strike situation may become intolerable before the strikers' power of resistance is ended. A strike is a war of attrition, in which the workers cannot long continue after their union funds, their private savings and any help that may come from friendly donations have been exhausted. When dealing with an employer whose capital is limited and who fears the encroachments of his business competitors, a strike covering a restricted field may be a formidable weapon. When dealing with powerful concerns, like the Port authorities, larger methods are required.

Should the Government intervene to secure food supplies, the question arises as to what labour it will employ and on what terms.

Should the Government employ other workers than those who are on strike, or should it employ labour on terms lower than those demanded by the strikers, it will be playing the part of strike breaker.

Should the Government make any attempt to show impartiality, as between employers and employed, it will actually injure the position of the strikers.

That the Government may use bluejackets to the detriment of the strikers is an assertion made by Mr. Ben Tillet and reported in the *Daily Herald*. For the Government to take such a step, or any step, which would weight the scales in favour of the employers in the struggle, would be a treacherous crime against the workers who have placed it where it is. Such a step would greatly hasten the day of its downfall. The Labour Cabinet may be fearing assaults from the Right, but its real danger lies to the Left. The statements of Mr. Ben Tillett should, however, be received with considerable reserve.

The Court of Inquiry.

The composition of the Court of Inquiry appointed by Mr. Shaw, the Minister of Labour, will not, we think, be regarded as at all satisfactory by the rank-and-file of the Labour Party supporters.

It actually gives a majority of two to one against the Trade Union representative. Mr. Holman Gregory, K.C., the chairman, is a Liberal Member of Parliament. There are only two other members of the Court. One of these is Sir Andrew Duncan, Vice-President of the Shipbuilding Employers' Federation, and Coal Controller in 1919 and 1920. Like the chairman, he is also a barrister.

The Trade Union representative is Mr. Henry Boothman, General Secretary of the Amalgamated Association of Cotton Spinners, Clitheroe; member of the Trade Union Congress General Council, and member of the Oldham Town Council.

Trade Union Blacklegs.

The lack of solidarity which is the most noticeable feature of Trade Union practice, is, as usual, strikingly demonstrated in this contest. The so-called "Blue" Union, the National Amalgamated Stevedores, Lightermen and Dockers' Union, has blacklegged on

the members of the Transport and General Workers' Union, just as the N.U.R. blacklegged on the A.S.L.E.F. in the recent railway strike.

The history of the "Blue" Union must not be forgotten. When the rank-and-file dockers refused to accept a reduction in wages eight months ago, and came out on strike to resist it, the officials of the Transport and General Workers' Union ordered its members to accept the reduction and refused strike pay. The "Blue" Union was therefore formed by the strikers.

The refusal of the "Blue" Union to support the present strike may therefore be regarded as retaliation for the bad treatment meted out to the dockers by the Transport and General Workers' Union officials eight months ago.

There is also another aspect of the case. It is stated, and the statement has undoubtedly gained acceptance in some quarters, that the Transport and General Workers' Union hopes by the present strike to destroy the new union, and bring its members back into its own fold. The eight months' old "Blue" Union naturally could not provide benefits for its members during a long strike. The older union would offer strike benefits to all the "Blue" Union members who would re-join it. The "Blue" Union has justified its refusal to strike on the ground that it was taking separate action to secure recognition from the port authorities, and it finally joined the strike.

Nevertheless, the refusal of the "blue" Union members to join the strike is a suicidal one from the point of view of the docker, to whatever union he may happen to belong.

The Failure of the Unions.

The failure of the Trade Unions is shown, not only in the fact that they are unable to secure united action in one industry, but also because they cannot secure simultaneous action in many industries. The miners are preparing to strike in the early future, but the dockers' struggle will be over before the miners' take action.

The call of Mr. Bromley to the engine drivers and firemen to "hold the ring," and the decision of the N.U.R. that those of its members who come under the Shaw award shall strike are merely futile. Concerted action at least of all transport workers is essential.

The workshop councils in all industries, able to take immediate, simultaneous action unhindered by bureaucracy, unhampered by agreements, for they will make none, must be the industrial fighting forces of the future.

Strike Profiteering.

It was amusing to find a capitalist paper, *Daily Mail*, demanding that dealers should be prevented from using the strike as a means of profiteering at the public expense. We should like the Government to take such vigorous steps as would cause the *Daily Mail* to regret its outburst. We fear that our wish will not, however, be gratified.

THE INTERNATIONAL WORKERS' REVOLUTION.

By HERMAN GORTER.

III.

We shall sum up the first period by saying that even in their so-called Communist revolutionary stage the Bolshevists proved their capitalist character by the distribution of the soil, their slogan of the self-determination of all nations, the peace of Brest-Litovsk, by admitting peasants to the Soviets and giving them political power, and finally by their party dictatorship.

We shall now examine the second period, which began after February, 1921.

Hitherto, both the peasants and the proletariat, under the guidance of the Bolshevists, had fulfilled their historic mission in striving, the proletariat to establish Communism, the peasants to establish the democratic-capitalist Republic.

In February, 1921, *the rising in the fortress of Kronstadt, on the battleships and in Petersburg*, broke out. Then—as by a breath—Communism collapsed. Its foundations disappeared in an instant. It may be argued that the rising was very insignificant considering the huge size of the country. Moreover, the peasants were not, and are not, organised as a class; but the small act of a small group of peasants was sufficient—it is said that the warships were mostly manned by peasants' sons.

The Bolshevist party represented principally the vast millions who wanted land, and as soon as quite a small section of those millions showed that they wanted something more than land, the party at once gave way, and the proletariat, out of which the party had been evolved, had finished with its Communism. The proletariat was made the servant of the peasantry. To advance the interests of the peasants, the proletariat had to slave under the orders of its own party, which was, from now, no longer the representative of the proletariat and its Communism, but of the peasantry and its capitalism.

We shall recapitulate now the greatest changes in the changing over to capitalism, not in their chronological order, which is of small importance here, but to explain what has happened. The reader must understand that behind all these changes is the hidden influence of the peasants, which did not even move as a mass, which was not even organised. It only showed itself locally, but by its enormous numbers it made the whole Bolshevist party its tool. It was like an elementary power which forced the Bolshevists—even men like Lenin—to stand against the class from which the Bolshevists had sprung, and which was inimical to the peasantry.

We can cite examples from the bourgeois revolutions where the representatives of a class were compelled to rise against their class by the power of other classes. But in those bourgeois revolutions both or all the bourgeois classes, that is to say, the landed proprietors, industrialists and financiers stood on the same basis. Such a fight was always small. But here in Russia the representatives of quite a new world—a Communist one—were opposed to the reactionaries who wanted to be the builders of the old capitalist order. They did what the reactionaries wanted, though it was against their own class. What the reactionaries wanted, of course, was to build up capitalism.

Without resistance all that was Communist disappeared. Industry was denationalised, at first partly. The absolute State monopoly of the most important food stuffs and raw materials was cancelled; the State regulation of trade unions was abolished. Private trading, at first only internal, afterwards also with foreign countries, was again introduced; the principle of unpaid service to the State disappeared; the principle of the free maintenance of the workers and employees was abandoned, and the wage system was reintroduced.

Communism vanished like a ghost into the background, and capitalism re-appeared, ever stronger, in the foreground.

Let us recall its main work, in detail, so that proletarians may see how capitalism is made by Communists in a peasant State. Thus the workers in Western Europe may no longer be fooled, but may learn that they who are not dwelling in a State controlled by peasants can bring about Communism.

Capitalist property re-appeared, and how? We take the following extract from a decree of the Russian Soviet Republic, dated May 27th, 1921 (published in *Izvestia* of June 18th, and in the French newspaper, *Journal des Débats*, in a French translation by a Russian delegate at the Hague Congress):

> "All citizens have the right to engage in industrial and commercial occupations. This right is founded on:
>
> (1) The right to hold property in houses, including the right to sell them, and to sell or let the ground on which such houses are situated.
>
> (2) The right to make contracts with local authorities to build on urban and rural land, with the right of ownership for 49 years.
>
> (3) The right to own houses, factories and workshops, industrial and commercial undertakings, machinery, and means of production, agricultural and industrial property, financial capital.
>
> (4) The right to mortgage these properties or to borrow money on land.
>
> (5) The right to inventions, trade marks, and author's royalties.
>
> (6) The right of married people and their children to testamentary or legal inheritance, up to 10,000 gold roubles, the right of legal enforcement of contracts.

The private ownership of the soil naturally re-appeared. The law of May 15th states, it is true, that the whole of the land belongs to the Republic. In fact, under the mantle of the Socialist State the law gives the peasants full ownership. For the law declares that a peasant can only lose the right to use the soil, on three conditions:

(1) If he himself ceases to use it;
(2) For criminal reasons;
(3) If the State claims the soil for its own purposes.

There are a few other restrictions, but in the main they are rules for the personal acquisition of property. The Soviet Republic has returned to the policies of Stolypin, the last minister of the Czar.

The law makes two important stipulations. It gives the peasants the right to sub-let their land for one year (or, in exceptional cases, for two years).

The second and more important stipulation is the cancelling of the order which forbade the hiring of workmen. This is now permitted if all the members of a peasant family are at work.

The carrying out of the law regarding rent and the hiring of workers is left to the Peasant Committees; that is to say, the Soviet State gives the peasant absolute freedom on these important points. Agriculture thus becomes the basis of a capitalist State. In the present condition of Russia this will not be a rapid process, but if the harvests are good it will be more rapid than many people think.

Proprietors and landlords are created, and a rural proletariat is formed. A home market springs up and becomes the basis for the wholesaler and a reservoir of workers owning nothing but their labour, which may be exploited by capitalist industry and commerce.

This is the way Russia will go if the European revolution does not come to her aid. It is the way all capitalist States have grown up from a peasant population. In this case the capitalist State is being developed under the guidance of celebrated Communists and a small bureaucratic party which was once Communist.

(To be continued.)

UNDER THE STARS AND STRIPES.

Patrick Casey, I.W.W., who left England four or five years ago, and was a member of the N.A.F.T.A. here, is in St. Quentin Prison, California, under sentence of 14 years. He was convicted under the iniquitous Criminal Syndicalism law merely for taking part in the Los Angeles harbour strike.

William Rutherford, who left England in September, 1913, and was a member of the I.L.P. and S.L.P. in this country, is also in St. Quentin serving 14 years. His only offence is that he came forward to give evidence for a comrade, but when he had given his testimony he was arrested for membership of the I.W.W. under the Criminal Syndicalism law, purely because he admitted membership of the I.W.W. in giving his evidence.

Will the Labour Government make representations on behalf of these British subjects?

What do comrades say?

Germinal Circle. Fifth evening, Wednesday, February 20th, 7-11 p.m., Rehearsal Theatre, 3, Bedford Street, Strand. Admission Free. Silver Collection.

THE AWAKENING OF A MOTHER.

By Maxim Gorky.

They spoke in the village about the socialists who distributed broadcast leaflets in blue ink. In these leaflets the conditions prevailing in the factory were trenchantly and pointedly depicted, as well as the strikes in St. Petersburg and Southern Russia; and the working men were called upon to unite and fight for their interests.

The staid people who earned good pay waxed wroth as they read the literature, and said abusively: "Breeders of rebellion! For such business they ought to get their eyes blacked." And they carried the pamphlets to the office.

The young people read the pamphlets eagerly, and said excitedly: "It's all true!"

The majority, broken down with their work, and indifferent to everything, said lazily: "Nothing will come of it. It is impossible!"

But the leaflets made a stir among the people, and when a week passed without their getting any, they said to one another:

"None again to-day! It seems the printing must have stopped."

Then on Monday the leaflets appeared again; and again there was a dull buzz of talk among the working men.

In the taverns and the factory strangers were noticed, men whom no one knew. They asked questions, scrutinised everybody; looked around, ferreted about, and at once attracted universal attention, some by their watchfulness, others by their excessive obtrusiveness.

The mother knew that all this commotion was due to the work of her son Pavel. She saw how all the people were drawn together about him. He was not alone, and therefore it was not so dangerous. But pride in her son mingled with her apprehension for his fate; it was his secret labours that discharged themselves in fresh currents into the narrow, turbid stream of life.

One evening Marya Korsunova rapped at the window from the street, and when the mother opened it, she said in a loud whisper:

"Now, take care, Pelagueya; the boys have gotten themselves into a nice mess! It's been decided to make a search to-night in your house, and Mazin's and Vyesovschikov's."

The mother heard only the beginning of the woman's talk; all the rest of the words flowed together in one stream of ill-boding, hoarse sounds.

Marya's thick lips flapped hastily one against the other. Snorts issued from her fleshy nose, her eyes blinked from side to side as if on the look-out for somebody in the street.

"And, mark you, I do not know anything, and I did not say anything to you, mother dear, and did not even see you to-day, you understand?"

Then she disappeared.

* * *

The searchers appeared at the very time they were not expected, nearly a month after this anxious night. Nikolay Vyesovshchikov was at Pavel's house talking with him and Andrey about their newspaper. It was late, about midnight. The mother was already in bed. Half awake, half asleep, she listened to the low, busy voices. Presently Andrey got up and carefully picked his way through and out of the kitchen, quietly shutting the door after him. The noise of the iron bucket was heard on the porch. Suddenly the door was flung wide open; the Little Russian entered the kitchen, and announced in a loud whisper:

"I hear the jingling of spurs in the street!"

The mother jumped out of bed, catching at her dress with a trembling hand; but Pavel came to her door and said calmly:

"You stay in bed; you're not feeling well."

A cautious, stealthy sound was heard on the porch. Pavel went to the door, and knocking at it with his hand, asked:

"Who's there?"

A tall, grey figure shot through the doorway; after it another; two gendarmes pushed Pavel back, and stationed themselves on either side of him, and a loud mocking voice called out:

"No one you expect, eh?"

The words came from a tall, lank officer, with a thin, black moustache. The village policeman, Fedyakin, appeared at the bedside of the mother, and, raising one hand to his cap, pointed the other at her face, and, making terrible eyes, said:

"This is his mother, your honour!" Then, waving his hand toward Pavel: "And this is he himself."

"Pavel Vlasov?" inquired the officer, screwing up his eyes; and when Pavel silently nodded his head, he announced, twirling his moustache:

"I have to make a search in your house. Get up, old woman!"

"Who is there?" he asked, turning suddenly and making a dash for the door.

"Your name?" his voice was heard from the other room.

Two other men came in from the porch: the old smelter, Tveryakov, and his lodger, the stoker Rybin, a staid, dark-coloured peasant. He said in a thick, loud voice:

"Good evening, Nilovna."

She dressed herself, all the while speaking to herself in a low voice, so as to give herself courage:

"What sort of a thing is this? They come at night. People are asleep and they come —"

The room was close, and for some reason smelt strongly of shoe blacking. Two gendarmes and the village commissioner, Ryskin, their heavy tread resounding on the floor, removed the books from the shelves and put them on the table before the officer. Two others rapped on the walls with their fists, and looked under the chairs. One man clumsily clambered upon the stove in the corner.

* * *

The officer quickly seized the books with the long fingers of his white hand, turned over the pages, shook them, and with a dexterous movement of the wrist flung them aside. Sometimes a book fell to the floor with a light thud. All were silent. The heavy breathing of the perspiring gendarmes was audible; the spurs clanked, and sometimes the low question was heard: "Did you look here?"

The mother stood by Pavel's side against the wall. She folded her arms over her bosom, like her son, and both regarded the officer. The mother felt her knees trembling, and her eyes became covered with a dry mist.

Suddenly the piercing voice of Nikolay cut into the silence:

"Why is it necessary to throw the books on the floor?"

The mother trembled. Tveryakov rocked his head as if it had been struck on the back. Rybin uttered a peculiar cluck, and regarded Nikolay attentively.

The officer threw up his head, screwed up his eyes, and fixed them for a second on the pock-marked, mottled, immobile face. His fingers began to turn the leaves of the books still more rapidly. His face was yellow and pale; he twisted his lips continually. At times he opened his large grey eyes wide, as if he suffered from an intolerable pain, and was ready to scream out in impotent anguish.

* * *

"You, Nakhodka, you have been searched before?" asked the officer.

"Yes, I was searched in Rostov and Saratov. Only there the gendarmes addressed me as 'Mr.'"

The officer winked his right eye, rubbed it, and showing his fine teeth, said:

"And so you happen to know, *Mr.* Nakhodka—yes, you, *Mr.* Nakhodka—who those scoundrels are who distribute criminal proclamations and books in the factory, eh?"

The Little Russian swayed his body, and with a broad smile on his face was about to say something, when the irritating voice of Nikolay again rang out:

"This is the first time we have seen scoundrels here!"

Silence ensued. There was a moment of breathless suspense. The scar on the mother's face whitened, and her right eyebrow travelled upward. Rybin's black beard quivered strangely. He dropped his eyes, and slowly scratched one hand with the other.

"Take this dog out of here!" said the officer.

Two gendarmes seized Nikolay under the arm and rudely pulled him into the kitchen. There he planted his feet firmly on the floor and shouted:

"Stop! I am going to put my coat on."

The police commissioner came in from the yard and said:

"There is nothing out there. We searched everywhere."

"Well, of course!" exclaimed the officer, laughing. "I knew it! There's an experienced man here, it goes without saying."

The mother listened to his thin, dry voice, and looking with terror into the yellow face, felt an enemy in this man, an enemy without pity, with a heart full of aristocratic disdain of the people. Formerly she had but rarely seen such persons, and now she had almost forgotten they existed.

"Then this is the man whom Pavel and his friends have provoked," she thought.

"I place you, *Mr.* Andrey onisimov Nakhodka, under arrest."

"What for?" asked the Little Russian composedly.

"I will tell you later!" answered the officer with spiteful civility.

* * *

"Wait a moment, Pasha!" cried the mother, rushing to the table and then addressing the officer: "Why do you snatch people away thus?"

"That does not concern you. Silence!" shouted the officer, rising.

"Bring in the prisoner Vyesovshchikov!" he commanded, and began to read aloud a document which he raised to his face.

Nikolay was brought into the room.

"Hats off!" shouted the officer, interrupting his reading.

Rybin went up to Vlasova, and patting her on the back, said in an undertone:

"Don't get excited, mother!"

"How can I take my hat off if they hold my hands?"

The officer flung the paper on the table.

"Sign," he said curtly.

The mother saw how everyone signed the document, and her excitement died down, a softer feeling taking possession of her heart. Her eyes filled with tears—burning tears of insult and impotence. Such tears she had wept for twenty years of her married life, but within the later years she had almost forgotten their acid, heart-corroding taste.

The officer regarded her contemptuously. He scowled and remarked:

"You cry before your time, my lady! Look out, or you won't have tears left for the future!"

"A mother has enough tears for everything, everything! If you have a mother, she knows it!"

The officer hastily put the papers into his new portfolio with its shining lock.

"How independent they all are in your place!" He turned to the police commissioner.

"An impudent pack!" mumbled the commissioner.

"March!" commanded the officer.

"Good-bye, Andrey! Good-bye, Nikolay!" said Pavel, warmly and softly pressing his comrades' hands.

"That's it! Until we meet again!" the officer scoffed.

(Extract from "Comrades.")

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Our View.

The terrible munitions explosion at Erith, which resulted in the death of thirteen young women, is a shock to the public conscience, reminding it that munitions of war are still being handled, both for the chronic wars against exploited peoples and classes which never have ceased, and for the next big war between the great Powers.

These girls who lost their lives the other day were killed, as other girls were killed in another recent accident, through working for a miserable pittance at separating the component parts of cartridges, in order that those parts might be used again. The firm for which the girls were working in this case is engaged under Government contract as agent for the Government.

It is stated in the Press that the work was under the jurisdiction of Major H. M. McKenna, Chief Safety Officer of the Disposal Board, and that a Resident Safety Officer, Captain A. MacDonald, was at the works subject to Major McKenna's instructions. Without expressing any opinion as to the qualifications of these officers for their task, qualifications which should now be made public, we may assume that the Government Disposal Board, since its safety officers had oversight of the work, is responsible for the manner in which it was carried on.

We may also assume that the work is so dangerous that in spite of any precautions that may be taken, serious accidents are liable to occur.

An inquiry will, of course, be held into the cause of the accident, but the real cause is the character of the work done and of the materials which are handled.

We demand that all such work should be stopped. The out-of-date munitions left over from the war should be got rid of as safely as possible without regard to the salving of the material, which is of small importance compared to the safety of those at work on it.

We further insist that all disposing of material left over from the war, which involves danger, shall be performed by persons occupying well-paid posts of high responsibility in the Army—not by sweated girls, ignorant of the awful risks to which they are exposed.

This is an administrative matter in which the Labour Government is able to take immediate action.

The Class Areas Bill, which the Smuts Government is introducing into South Africa, compels all Asiatics to reside and trade within restricted areas, and not outside them. The measure is prompted by hatred of the competition of Asiatic traders by European traders.

The cruel jealousies of capitalism are without number.

It is said that the resignation of the Bavarian dictator, Dr. Von Kahr, is due to representations that the British Labour Government could not intervene to restore Bavarian authority in the Palatinate, unless a guarantee were given that Bavaria would return to constitutional conditions. It is doubtless all to the good that Dr. Von Kahr and General Von Lossow, the commander of the Bavarian Reichswehr, should have resigned, but neither freedom in the old Radical sense, nor economic emancipation of the working class, seems to be given a loop-hole for emerging under the arrangements which the Allied Powers have dictated to Bavaria and the Palatinate.

In the case of the Palatinate Mr. MacDonald said, in reply to a Parliamentary question on February 18th:

> "As a result of considerable correspondence between His Majesty's Government and the French and Belgian Governments, it has been decided to entrust to the representatives of the three Governments at Coblenz the task of supervising the gradual restoration of normal administration in the Palatinate, and the disarming of all unauthorised persons. With the object of facilitating a settlement on these lines, the Rhineland High Commission has nominated an Inter-Allied delegation, which has proceeded to the Palatinate, and is co-operating with the local authorities."

Germany is coming more and more to be treated as the Western Powers treat the peoples of Africa and India, on the pretext that they belong to a less advanced civilisation than that of the dominant intruders, and are incapable of managing their own affairs. This sort of bullying, even when masquerading in paternal guise, as in this case, is in every sense objectionable, and is only tolerated by its victims because it is backed by a military force they cannot see their way to resist.

We shall be told that Mr. MacDonald has agreed to the plan only in order that the British military may counteract the aggressive designs of the French Government. We repeat our view that the proper course for those who are opposed to capitalist militarism and imperialism is to refuse to take part in the military occupation of Germany.

The plan for Bavaria itself is similar to that devised for the Palatinate.

The Parliamentary Machine grinds on in its accustomed manner. Members of the Labour Government read out the answers to questions prepared for them by the departmental officials, just as their predecessors did. They would like, perhaps, to impart a touch of individuality or humanity, but the machine does not allow of it. Ministers are dependent on the information supplied to them by their departments. Time allows of little, and as the session proceeds, will allow of less personal research by the Minister who is supposed to be responsible to the Nation for all the doings of his department.

Attendance in the House encroaches seriously upon the all too small attention which a Minister can give to the stupendous task of acquiring a knowledge of what his department does, and to develop a policy which may modify, in some degree, the policy he has inherited; the traditional policy of the department which flows on, a swift, overwhelming current, sweeping away most of the little barques which he, like a feeble child, may seek to fling into the stream of departmental affairs.

Labour Ministers are carrying on the policies of the past, answering questions about things that were done before they came into office, defending those things, accepting responsibility for them.

Mr. Trevelyan sponsored the Board of Agriculture's foot and mouth disease slaughter policy, stated the sum necessary to compensate the owners of the cattle that have been killed, whilst his under-Secretary, Mr. Smith, pleaded inability to compensate the labourers who have been deprived of work by the slaughter, saying that the law, as it was made by a previous Government, only gave power to compensate the owners.

Mr. Stephen Walsh has fallen an easy prey to his department. At the bidding of the War Office he briefly replied to a question that Mr. MacDonald's pledge to the Army ranker officers would not be kept, as Mr. MacDonald had not understood the position when he made it. When Mr. MacDonald was twitted on the subject by Mr. Austin Chamberlain he answered: "I shall do my best to put it right. . . . . I shall look into it again. . . . I am not going to upset any decision of the War Office. The War Office has to decide it. . . ."

Mr. J. H. Thomas seems to accept, with willingness, even with zest, the position expected of him, the position of defender of his department. Yet the Colonial Secretary has to be responsible for many ugly occurrences. He denied with vigour that air raids have been used for enforcing payment of taxes in Mesopotamia. He seemed prepared to defy any suggestion that the use of the bomb has ever been anything but beneficial to the subject peoples of the British Empire. He even rebuked Lady Astor for appearing to cast aspersions upon the sale into slavery of little girls, under the "mui tsai" system, which has been abolished in other parts of China. He did not turn a hair in announcing that there are 296 registered brothels in Hong Kong, and seemed to regard this as having no connection with the specially high incidence of venereal diseases amongst British troops stationed in Hong Kong. When urged to consider the case of King Prempeh of Ashanti, who has been detained in the Seychelles for over 25 years, without charge or trial, Mr. Thomas observed that the Governor of the Gold Coast had advised his predecessor that "the time was not yet ripe for Prempeh's return." Nevertheless, Mr. Thomas would "take an opportunity of discussing the matter" during the Governor's approaching leave in this country. Over the Havanas and the wine the exile's position will receive a word or two amid the jokes and banter. Twenty-five years of a black man's life is a small matter to statesmen.

When asked by Mrs. Wintringham whether he would take any action on the flogging to death of a native in Southern Rhodesia, Mr. Thomas obligingly offered to send the hon. Member a record of the proceedings received from the High Commissioner for South Africa "for perusal." An interesting MS., ladies and gentlemen; read it, with horror, if you will, then forget it.

When Mr. Adamson, the Secretary for Scotland, was appealed to on behalf of the famine stricken people in the Scottish Islands and Highlands, he was driven to minimise the distress, and to expatiate on the relief measures taken by the late Government, the local authorities, and charitably disposed persons, through funds opened by Lord Lieutenants, Provosts and Mayors. The Board of Agriculture would provide seed: he "hoped" it would be at less than cost price. As to the scores of people, who, through their poverty, would be evicted on Whit Sunday, the Government had "a lot on hand," but he "*hoped*" that their plight would not be "forgotten." He spoke as a man fettered and overwhelmed.

Progress toward a proper state of society; a brotherly condition, in which there will be plenty for all and the free consumption of the common product, at this rate would take a thousand years! The pace must be quickened. That is imperative.

* * *

In the House of Commons one cannot see the wood for the trees. It is a place of party and personal intrigue, of sham warfare for party advantage. Amid the careerism and the flippancies, the claims of unfortunate people forlornly obtrude themselves—the urgent grievances of pensioners and ex-servicemen, of wage workers unjustly dismissed, of workless people denied insurance benefit, of widows, of orphans, of the houseless, the destitute and the afflicted. So many they are they lose all appearance of actuality, become cases to be filed and tabulated merely. Most of the claims are thrust aside with the indifference born of habit. Occasionally a petition is granted; the hardship, in that one case partially mitigated; the underlying cause never touched.

When, from the outer world, the real world, the cries of the unfortunate shape themselves

into some general demand; then, after the agitation of years, at last, at long, long last, ear is granted—some palliative, pallid and inadequate, is devised to meet one of the outstanding grievances that come surging up from the troublous life of a society based on unjust foundations.

* * *

Each attempt to redress a particular grievance produces new hardships. That is inevitable, since the social system is based on scarcity and the exploitation of the many by the few.

* * *

The Capital Levy is not an instalment of Socialism, though some of its rank and file supporters have made that extravagent claim for it. We are glad to have the definite admission that it is not, which Mr. MacDonald made to the House of Commons on February 14th. He said of the Capital Levy:—

"Some people imagine this is a stage to Socialism. It is nothing of the kind. It is a proposal—it may be right or it may be wrong—to ease the burdens of the National Debt which the industry of the country has to bear. . . . It would be folly for any hon. Members to say that the Government propose to introduce a Capital Levy in this Parliament, and it would be equally folly for the Government to entertain any idea of doing anything of the kind."

The Capital Levy is one of those red herrings which are periodically put forward as a specific for curing society of its most pressing ills. The only tangible result produced by them is to induce some of those who have been converted to Communism to abandon its service and propaganda, in the hope of finding a speedier way out of social chaos.

Production for use, not for sale and profit, and, consequently, the abolition of money, wages, rent, interest, and profit.

The abolition of Kings and Parliaments.

Organisation of production by those who do the work on a Workshop Council basis.

The sharing of productive work by all.

Plenty for all and poverty for none. Since the community can produce more than it can consume of the necessities and comforts of life, the people's wants can be and should be supplied freely, according to their needs and desires.

What we want.

The abolition of the private property system.

The common ownership of the land and the means of production, distribution, and transport.

E. SYLVIA PANKHURST.

Questions on the above points are invited, and speakers can be supplied to explain them by the Communist Workers' Movement. Workers' Dreadnought Office, 152, Fleet Street, London, E.C.4.

PARLIAMENT AS WE SEE IT.

Amid the daily questions on the chronic troubles, relating to pensions, unemployment, housing, and so on, Mr. Milne ( ) asked whether the murderer of Mr. Day in Calcutta was a member of the Non-Co-operation party. Mr. Wallhead asked whether the late lamented Crippen was a member of the Tory Party; and Mr. Richard (Under-Secretary for India) said the assassin was member of a revolutionary secret society, not the Non-Co-operation Party.

No Amnesty For Irish Political Prisoners.

Mr. McEntee (Lab.) asked whether the Government would amnesty all Irish political prisoners.

The Under Home Secretary replied that the Home Secretary is always prepared to consider representations in particular cases. He indicated that some of the North of Ireland prisoners have been sent over to England, but declared the Home Secretary has no jurisdiction over them. That is certainly a peculiar state of affairs!

The refusal to let Mr. Art O'Brien have a decent meal at the judge's request was defended.

School Buildings, Meals, and Scholarships.

Mr. Trevelyan observed that, now he is Minister of Education, the restrictions on building new school accommodation will be withdrawn. The limit to school meals will also be abolished, and the State scholarships, which were suspended, will recommence as soon as possible.

Lieut.-Colonel Ward in Russia.

Lieut.-Colonel Ward protested that when he assisted Koltchak in Russia he was not in the pay of Koltchak, but of the British Government, and was commander of the British forces at Omsk.

A Poser for Lloyd George.

Mr. Austin Chamberlain said that Mr. Lloyd George is "the only begetter and true father of a great part of the Safeguarding of Industries Act." What would Mr. Lloyd George do about it now as one of the leaders of the Liberal Party?

Mr. MacDonald and the National Debt.

Mr. MacDonald desires the National Debt to be paid by honest means. He says:—

"I regard two means as dishonest, one repudiation and the other inflation."

Refused by the Labour Government.

To introduce a measure permitting farmers to kill game which destroys their crops.

To introduce a bill making persons who have received Poor Law Relief eligible for election to public bodies.

Communist Organisations.

Major Kindersley ( ) gave notice to call attention to the Communist organisations in Great Britain.

Chairman.

Mr. Robert Young was elected Chairman of Ways and Means. Mr. MacDonald indicated that he is trying to come to a non-party arrangement for the Deputy-Chairmanship—apparently the Liberals have put in a claim.

Singapore Naval Base.

In reply to questions whether the Government has decided to abandon the Singapore Naval Base, Mr. C. G. Ammon, Parliamentary Secretary to the Admiralty, and a pacifist in the late war, said:

"As is generally known, those responsible for the present Government have always taken the view that no adequate reason has been shown for the very large expenditure proposed by the late Government at Singapore.

"*The Government, however, think it only right that they should hear and examine the case for the scheme before announcing their decision, and this they are proceeding to do.*"

He added that in the meantime no fresh expenditure would be incurred. Up to January 20th, £13,000 had been spent, and the Government was "*actually committed by signed contracts to an expenditure of* £34,000. *Liabilities have been incurred on work already in progress,* such as railways, road connections, water supplies, etc., but until further reports are received I cannot state how much expenditure has been or will be incurred."

The work already begun is thus still going on. Mr. Ammon further stated that the Dominion Governments will be consulted.

Tory Humour.

Mr. Baldwin was cynically humorous in replying to Mr. MacDonald's opening speech (dealt with in our leading column last week). He said that the new Prime Minister seemed to be labouring under a tremendous sense of responsibility, not yet fully experienced by his colleagues. As he watched them he thought of Rossetti's lines:

"The blessed damozel lean'd out
From the gold bar of Heaven."

"The wonder had not left their faces," he said, "at finding themselves where they are."

Mr. Baldwin teased Mr. MacDonald regarding his statement that the price of gilt-edged securities had gone up with his advent to office, and asked whether the rise in the price of food was also due to the appearance of a Labour Government. As to foreign politics, he declared that Mr. MacDonald is experiencing just the same feelings as his predecessors. "The belief that by exhibiting a spirit of sweet reasonableness we could bend the whole of Europe to our will." He predicted that Mr. MacDonald would find that "the spirit of sweet reasonableness may be carried to excess without reaping any of the rewards which are its due." He declared that the Labour Government is carrying on the foreign policy of its predecessors. The same, he added, was true of unemployment:

> "As each Government has tried to do a little bit more in the way of palliatives to try to sweeten an impossible position for those who are suffering from it, so this Government is proposing to take a little step in advance which would have had to be taken by any Government in power before the winter had passed."

Russia.

As to Russia, Mr. Baldwin quoted Zinonieff:

> "We shall support Mr. MacDonald as the rope supports the hanged man."
>
> "MacDonald will certainly grovel on all fours before the opulent English bourgeosie."

Mr. Rakovaky had spoken of loans of £20,000,000 to £30,000,000 being needed in Russia for trade credits, one-third of the amount being placed at the disposal of the Soviet Government. Mr. Baldwin drew from Mr. MacDonald the statement that there is no question of a loan by the British Government to the Soviet Government. The only question is that of guaranteeing British credits to British traders dealing with Russia.

Asquith Delivers an Ultimatum.

Mr. Asquith took Mr. MacDonald to task for not having declared the policy of his Government on the Safeguarding of Industries Act and the Imperial Conference resolutions by the Imperial Conference.

As to the proposed commission for dealing with taxation, Mr. Asquith considered that the only proper commission for such a purpose was the Cabinet itself, but if a commission were appointed, he wanted its composition and terms of reference to be decided by the House of Commons. This would have meant a tri-party commission. Mr. Snowden later indicated that such was not his intention.

Poplar.

Mr. Asquith proceeded to attack the action of Mr. Wheatley in rescinding the Mond "Poplar" order. He observed:

> "*I wish to say in the plainest and most unequivocal terms, that unless the Government can see their way, as I hope they will, to reconsider the action taken in that respect, I do not think there is the least chance of that administrative Act receiving the countenance or approval of the House of Commons.*"

That, of course, is a plain threat to turn the Government out.

Mr. Asquith declared that the Mond Order was issued "after a careful and impartial inquiry by a thoroughly competent commissioner who came down from Lancashire."

Mr. Lansbury retorted that the commissioner had taken no evidence from the Guardians, but had consulted their political opponent, Sir Alfred Warren, of the Tory Municipal Alliance.

Mr. Asquith declared that the Mond Order had been made under statutory powers made nearly a hundred years ago, as though it were thereby sanctified—instead of that being actually an evidence that it is out of date. He declared that terrible conditions exist in Poplar, but they also exist elsewhere. He argued that the rescinding of the Order was discouraging and paralysing the men of public spirit on other Boards and tempting them to follow the example of Poplar by giving way to their sympathy with poverty in defiance of law. He understood the tremendous pressure that must come from a man's conscience in the presence of such "hideous necessities" to induce him "to stretch and strain the law." Therefore he desired to have the power of the

law strengthened. He regarded the power t surcharge the Guardians as inadequat Perhaps Mr. Asquith desires the power t expel them from the Boards and impose a ter of imprisonment for the exercise of such dangerous vice as simple humanity in face o suffering!

Mr. Lansbury's Answer.

Mr. Lansbury replied that the House dare not pass a law saying that no able-bodied man shall have relief outside a workhouse, or that the Ministry of Health shall declare what relief every individual shall have.

Mr. Cooper said the commission had found a case in which a stevedore with 10s. had had £4 in relief in a single week—he had only been relieved one week for after he returned to work. He had had £1 for himself and wife and 6s. and 5s. per head for the children.

Widows in Poplar get £1 1s. 6d. with one child and rent and 1s. 6d. for coal. With two children £1 5s., with three £1 8s. 6d. There is no additional relief for any children over five in number. Mr. Lansbury declared that is monstrous: it is done in response to pressure from the Ministry of Health. An adult not living with his parents gets 12s. 6d. a week. Two adults living together get £1.

Poplar had defied the Ministry by refusing to count the earnings of sons and daughters as part of the income of their parents.

The Capital Levy.

Mr. Clynes, the Lord Privy Seal, when heckled on the subject of the Capital Levy, plainly stated that the Government will not raise it in this Parliament. He said:

> *"I need not, of course, argue that we could not, of course, approach any question of a Capital Levy when no national approval has been given to a device of that kind. . . .* The truth is that the device of the Capital Levy was not necessarily a Labour proposal, and it is known that it was looked upon at one time with a good deal of favour by many who are not attached to the Labour Party. We should be happy to receive from any quarter any alternative to the Capital Levy."
>
> As to the unemployed, Mr. Clynes said that previous Governments "began by giving them money. . . . Once you begin that, to give something for nothing, either to rich or poor, you will find it very difficult to check, and may find it, indeed, almost impossible to stop it."

These are rather strange remarks to come from a fellow-worker who must have known unemployment at first hand in his time!

£500 Houses at 9s. a Week.

Sir F. K. Wood (Cons.), desired to know know how the Government proposed to build houses for £500 a piece and let them at 9s. a week, including rates. Sixty per cent. would have to be deducted from rent, he said, for rent and maintenance, which would leave only £11 10s. per annum for rent. When the Government began to build houses under the Addison scheme, houses which could be built before the war for £350 went up to £800 or £1,000.

The millions now being dangled before employers and employed would result in sky-scraping prices.

An instance of the evils of capitalism, but the House did not notice that.

The Voice of the Labourer.

Mr. C. Edwards (Labour), who has worked as an agricultural labourer, protested that men of that class cannot pay 9s. a week rent. They get 6d. an hour, 23s. 7d. (less insurance), for a 48-hour week. That works out at 2½d. per meal for a family of five having three meals a day and 1s. 8½d. to pay rent, and buy boots, clothes, etc.

Of course it cannot be done!

Mr. Edwards declared that agriculture cannot pay a living wage to the labourers without a State subsidy.

Mr. Baldwin, in effect, said the same when he offered a bounty of £1 an acre to agriculture at the last election. Mr. MacDonald hopes to restore the industry to health by State loans or guarantees to start co-operative enterprise to buy seeds, manure, implements, and or disposing of the produce.

The state of affairs shows the disastrous ailure of the old-established system of private nterprise: Capitalism is indeed very sick.

The Tenant Farmer.

As to the tenant farmers, Mr. Edwards said hat the war-time corn production Act caused n increase in the value of agricultural land which produced land gambling. Tenant farmers feared they would be sold out of their holdings, and were induced to borrow money to buy them at inflated prices. They are paying enormous interest to the banks. The slump makes it impossible for them to pay. They will be obliged to go into the bankruptcy court and there will be no money for wages.

All hail Communism!

Futilities.

Lady Astor made one of her silly speeches about a fair day's work for a fair day's wage, which caused some Labour Members to be so foolish as to cry: "Your place is over here!" She declared that "the British Navy had gone further than any single agency to make possible civilisation such as it is, not only in England, but throughout the world."

As an American by birth, Lady Astor seems to imagine her rôle should be that of the aggressive British patriot. Her words were truer than she thought in a sense she certainly did not mean. The coercion of the British Navy has certainly helped to force and maintain British overlordship upon a large part of the world.

"Fit for Service, Fit for Pension."

Mr. Ayles (Labour) wanted to know whether the Government would adhere to the principle fit for service, fit for pension.

Johnston versus MacDonald.

Mr. T. Johnston (Lab.) asked the Prime Minister if his attention had been directed to the many authoritative statements made within the past two years upon the ruinous effects upon trade and employment caused by the policy of currency deflation and the effort to re-establish a free market for gold in London; if the Government is still guided by the conclusions of the committee on currency and foreign exchanges, commonly called the Cunliffe Committee; and if the Government is prepared to set up a Royal Commission of inquiry into our whole monetary system?

The Prime Minister: His Majesty's Government are of the opinion that the reappointment of a Committee on currency and foreign exchanges at the present time would be premature and inexpedient. The Government are still guided by the conclusions of the Committee on currency and foreign exchanges, commonly called the Cunliffe Committee.

To Abolish the Gap.

The Gap Bill which has passed its Second Reading abolishes the gap and does no more. The unemployed will be glad of it—more's the pity they have to be thankful for such small mercies.

No Withdrawal from Mesopotamia.

The Labour Government will not withdraw from Mesopotamia, as many of its supporters hoped. Mr. MacDonald said the Government is considering the situation "in view of the obligations imposed by the mandate on the one hand, and the undesirability of remaining there any longer than is necessary to set the native government on its feet."

That is what the last government said, as Tory Mr. Wood observed.

Dockers' Demonstration Stopped.

Extra police are said to have been drafted into the dock areas last Sunday. An unemployed demonstration in support of the strike on February 19th was stopped by the police. The Camberwell and Southwark procession was stopped at Rotherhithe Tunnel, the Deptford procession was stopped at the "Rising Sun." The London organiser of the unemployed was informed that if any attempt were made to hold a meeting the speakers would be arrested.

This seems decidedly extreme action for the police to take with a Labour Government in office.

FROM THE PUBLISHERS

"Turkey, the Great Powers, and the Bagdad Railway," a study in Imperialism, by Edward Mead Earle, Ph.D. (Macmillan, 10s. 6d.)

Mr. Earle describes in an interesting manner how backward Turkey invited exploitation, how the Germans seized the opportunity and overcame competition, and how the Bagdad Railway became a German Imperial enterprise. He tells of Russian resistance and French and British hostility to German expansion. Then the bargains by which it was attempted to patch up the rivalries, and finally the war and its aftermath.

The latter chapters are those of greatest interest to-day, because the war caused most people to gain considerable familiarity with the events treated in the earlier chapters.

Mr. Earle postulates that the war has completely destroyed German influence in the Near East, and that considerable resentment against the German military domination of 1917-18 has been left behind. Moreover, he says Germany is indisposed for any attempt to regain her former position.

Confiscation of Private Foreign Investments.

"The confiscation by the Treaty of Versailles of private property in foreign investments has set a precedent which will make German investors—as well as prudent investors everywhere—extremely chary of utilising their funds for the promotion of such enterprises as the Bagdad Railway."

Mr. Earle does not say, perhaps because it does not fall within the purview of his subject, that this decision of the Versailles Treaty provides a useful precedent for Soviet Russia to remember in discussing with the Powers the question of the pre-revolutionary foreign investments in Russia. If a war can be held by capitalist States to justify the confiscation of private investments, surely a revolution may be held to do so by a State calling itself a Socialist Soviet Republic?

The dismemberment of Austria and the formation of Jugo-Slavia have erected customs barriers barring the way of German trade towards the East.

Will Russia Return to Imperialism?

Mr. Earle recognises that the Russian revolution necessitated the abandonment of the old schemes of Russian Imperialism which made Russia the rival of Germany. He declares, however, that with the development of her industries Russia may again feel the urge to Imperialism. We agree; but the position is not correctly stated: It is with the development of her industries *on a competitive capitalist basis* that Russia will probably develop thus. Mr. Earle rightly states that any desire for a share in the Bagdad Railway, or other such enterprises, on the part of Russia, will not be heeded by the Western Powers until these are articulated in the language of power.

The New Eastern Struggle.

No sooner was the war against Germany ended than France and Britain began to contend against each other for domination in Turkey and for succession to the German position there. This Franco-British rivalry was already an old one: it had been merely set aside for the ousting of Germany.

The French Government complained that the peace had given Britain the lion's share of the spoils, and that in his agreement with Clemenceau of December, 1918, which gave Mosul and Palestine to Britain, Mr. Lloyd George had been guilty of sharp practice. The French declared that British support of self-government for the Arabs was merely an excuse to undermine the French mandate for Syria. Indeed, the British Government pledge of Palestine to the Jews, though previously it promised the country to the Arabs, reveals the fact that Britain was merely using the Arabs as pawns.

Mosul Oil.

The French continued contesting the claim of the British to exclusive control of the Mosul oil fields, till by the San Remo Agreement of April 24, 1920, the French were given the

quarter share which used to belong to Germany. Even then the British drove a shrewd bargain, for it was provided that the French should agree to the construction of two pipe lines and railways through French spheres of influence and that the oil should pass free of French taxes.

The French also considered, because they had held a 30 per cent. interest in the Bagdad Railway before the war, that they should have the controlling power in it now; but the Treaty of Sèvres placed the railway under international ownership and control.

The British Government desired to make Turkey weak, had loaded Turkey with reparations payments, and had placed Constantinople and Smyrna, the two essential commercial ports of Anatolia, under foreign control. Further, the British Government had "made possible" (we should rather say promoted) a Greek war against Turkey. France, on the other hand, preferred Turkey to be reasonably strong as a balance to British power in the Near East, and because French investors held 60 per cent. of the Turkish pre-war debt.

It was against French troops that the new nationalist Government of Angora marched. When it rose to power and when it attacked the French zone of Cilicia in the autumn of 1920, the French General Gourand was occupied by an Arab rebellion in Syria. To negotiate with Mustapha Kemal, of the Angora Government, was to defy the still unratified Treaty of Sèvres between the Sultan and the Allies. This was the course taken by the French Government, and on March 9th, 1921, an agreement was signed in London between France and the Angora Government. The Turkish Nationalists thereby granted priority to French capitalists. In the granting of concessions in Cilicia and Southern Armenia, it confirmed French interests in the Bagdad Railway, and recognised special cultural and religious interests of France in Turkey. France in return agreed to evacuate Cicilia, to readjust the boundary between Turkey and Syria, and to adopt a friendly attitude to the new Nationalist Government. Italy also made friends with the Nationalist Government on March 13th, 1921, for Italy regarded the Treaty of Sèvres as giving Greece too much advantage and frustrating her own ambitions in Asia Minor. Moreover, the Nationalist soldiers of Turkey were giving Italy the worst of it. Italy secured an agreement for Turkish-Italian collaboration in Adalia and the Heraclea coal mine. Italy pledged itself to support the Nationalist Turkish Government, and especially in the restitution of Thrace and Smyrna to Turkey.

The Angora Treaty.

France and Turkey continued to negotiate, and the Angora Treaty, signed for France by M. Franklin Bouillon, followed on October 20th, 1921.

This Treaty aroused great hostility in British Government circles. It adjusted boundaries so that a part of the Bagdad Railway, lately coming within the territory of the French mandate, now came on Turkish soil, this and other parts of the railway being given to French capitalists, to be nominated by the French Government. No preferential tariffs were to be established on the railway "in principle," but both Turks and French could introduce any exceptions to the principle they might think fit. The Turkish Government agreed to view favourably concessions for mines, railways, harbours, and rivers to French capitalists, and especially to award to them the exploitation of the Arghana copper mines and cotton growing in Cilicia.

Lord Curzon Protests.

Lord Curzon protested that the French had no right to recognise the Angora Nationalist Government or to treat at all with Turkey except in concert with the Allies. France, he urged, had no right to hand back to Turkey the territory over which she had been given a mandate, which had been conquered by British forces, and was a common guage of Allied victory. France had ignored the League of Nations. The portions of railway returned to Turkish territory were a menace to British communications in Mosul, Mesopotamia and Irak. Britain would not assent to French control of the Bagdad Railway, which was the common asset of the Allies. Britain would insist on the revision of the Angora Treaty.

The Greco-Turkish War.

At the Washington Conference in December, 1921, there was "a verbal war" between M. Briand and Lord Lee. Mr. Earle, as an American, does not hesitate to mention these little differences between French and British representatives. Franco-British differences at Genoa, a clash over reparations at midsummer, 1922, charges that the French and Italians were helping the Turks and counter-charges that the British were helping the Greeks, led to the crisis of September, 1922, when French and Italian troops withdrew from the Straits and neutral zone of Anatolia. Then came the French invasion of the Ruhr in January, 1923.

Lausanne.

At the Lausanne Conference to secure peace in the Near East, the conflict at first raged between Lord Curzon and the Turks. The British Government, forced to abandon its attempt to secure a Greek empire in Asia Minor to counteract the Greeks, now concentrated on maintaining the British hold in Mesopotamia and the oil fields of Mosul and in the neutralisation of the Straits. The French did not care for these things, and left Lord Curzon to fight the Turks whilst they concentrated on securing economic concessions for France and on good conditions for the French and Italian schools and missions. Presently, however, the French demanded too much, and the Turks began to work with the British against them. The French desired that all the pre-war as well as the new concessions to foreign exploiters should be confirmed. The British did not care for this, since most of the old British concessions were in areas now detached from Turkey, especially in Mesopotamia. The Lausanne Conference broke up, and the breach between France and Turkey widened.

Enter America.

On April 10th, 1923, the Angora Government awarded to an American syndicate, headed by Admiral Chester, concessions for nearly 3,000 miles of railway and valuable rights for exploiting mineral resources in Anatolia. This concession conflicted with French claims to a Black Sea railway concession granted in 1913 and the Arghana copper mines granted in 1921. The Chester concession was calculated to win American diplomatic support. The French Foreign Office informed the Angora Government that it was "a deliberately unfriendly act, of a nature to influence adversely the coming negotiations at Lausanne." Such is the diplomacy into which the Labour Party is now projecting itself. It is certainly entering a den of thieves!

Britain Wins.

The Lausanne Conference reopened on April 22nd, 1923, and on May 15th it became known that a syndicate of British banks had purchased a controlling interest in the "Bank für orientalischen Eisenbahnen" of Zurich, the Deutsche Bank's holding company for the Anatolian and Bagdad Railways. Ismet Pasha is said to have encouraged the British plan. This was a very important matter. Says Mr. Earle: "Thus, after twenty years of diplomatic bargaining, British Imperialists had won possession of the 'short cut to India'!"

At that time the Guaranty Trust of New York opened a branch bank in Constantinople, stating that Americans there had previously been obliged to rely on foreign banks, which was "not only inconvenient, *but devoid of that business secrecy which is so necessary in exploiting new fields.*"

In 1901 U.S. exports to Turkey amounted to only about 50,000 dollars. In 1913 they had risen to 3,500,000 dollars. Between 1913 and 1920 they rose to 42,200,000 dollars. Between 1913 and 1920 U.S. imports from Turkey rose from 22,100,000 dollars to 39,000,000 dollars.

The Importance of the Chester Concession.

The Chester concession gives the American-Ottoman Company the construction of 2,800 miles of railway, with exclusive rights to exploit all mineral resources within twenty kilometres on each side of the lines. The company may also lay such pipe lines as are necessary, utilise water power along the line of its railways, instal hydro electric stations for the service of its mines, ports and railways. It is to construct port and terminal facilities at Samsun on the Black Sea and at Youmourtalik on the Gulf of Alexandretta. Turkish Government lands required for right of way, terminal facilities, or exploiting mineral resources are to be transferred to the company, free of charge, for ninety-nine years. Public lands and quarries required for construction may be used free, and wood and timber cut without charge. The materials, machinery, lines, ports, capital and revenues of the company are to be free of all duties and taxes for 99 years. Its imported coal to be free for 20 years.

The Chester concession is probably as or more important than the Bagdad railway concession granted to Germany before the war and now secured by Britain.

According to Mr. Earle the Turks believe that the United States Government has no political ambitions in Turkey. Probably the Turks are too shrewd to be so mistaken, but consider it well to bring in America to counterbalance France and Britain. Dr. I. Found Bey, a member of the Angora National Assembly, when on a semi-official visit to U.S.A. in 1923, said the Chester concession was granted because it was a business enterprise without imperialist aims, and that was why the Grand National Assembly was "prepared to welcome American capital with open arms."

As Mr. Earle indicates, however, the United States Government is no less imperialist than those of other Powers, and he provides evidence to show that it may even out-do the Governments of Europe in this respect.

Dollar Diplomacy.

The United States Navy is said to be vitally interested in the Chester project. The Secretary for the Navy has said of it that the Navy "is always concerned with the possibility of oil supplies." An American port at Youmourtalik might be used as a U.S. naval base.

When American destroyers were sent to Constantinople in 1919 the possible development of economic resources was carefully investigated by representatives of American commercial interests. "The representatives were given every assistance by the Navy," and furnished with transport. Naval officers collect and furnish business information to American firms, notifying them of business opportunities. "One destroyer is kept continuously at Samsun, Turkey, to look after American tobacco interests at that port." The Navy Department says: "The permanent success" of American commerce in the Near East depends largely upon "the continued influence of the Navy in that region." An instructor in the U.S. Naval Academy says:

> "Destroyers are entering Turkish ports with 'drummers' as regular passengers, and their fantails piled high with American samples. An American destroyer has made a special trip at thirty knots to get American oil prospectors into a newly-opened field. . . . If this continues we shall cease to take a purely academic interest in the naval problems of the Near East. These problems are concerned with the protection of commerce, the control of narrow places in the Mediterranean waterways, and the naval forces which the interested nations can bring to bear. They cannot be discussed with constant reference to political and commercial aims."

All this leads inevitably to war with rival Powers and to the crushing of all freedom and development amongst the exploited peoples of the Near East.

The only solution for the rivalry amongst the powerful capitalist groups for the exploitation of the weaker nations and their natural resources is Communism, which provides the only alternative to war.

> "Should Great Britain succeed in establishing her point that the *Bank für Orientalischen Eisen fahnew* is a neutral

ORIGINAL DEFECTIVE.

Swiss rather than enemy German corporation, and therefore exempt from seizure under the reparations provisions of the Treaty of Versailles; and should the Chester concessions be recognised as superseding the rights of the Black Sea railways, French interests in the Levant will face a powerful Anglo-American which it will be very difficult for them to combat with any degree of success. And the power of French government is so heavily invested in the Ruhr occupation that it is doubtful if it can do anything at all to coerce the Turks into full recognition of French claims."

Here, indeed, is a first-class subject of rivalry between French and British capitalism, with the United States coming into line with Britain against France, and in the last analysis against Britain also. What solution has the Labour Government to offer? Is the MacDonald Government prepared to abandon the advantage secured by its predecessor for the sake of peace?

In summing up the situation, Mr. Earle says:

"Italy, which sought to transform the Adriatic and the Ægean into Italian lakes, has finally been compelled to recognise that she assumed imperial liabilities out of all proportion to her economic resources. France, after achieving a temporary victory in the new Turkey, has had to surrender her position to more powerful competitors. But Great Britain has emerged from the conflict in all her glory. She has obtained possession of another highway to the East. Alongside the Suez Canal, in the collection of British imperial jewels, will be placed Jerusalem and Basra and Bagdad."

This is exceedingly interesting and important. It is thus that Lord Curzon, and the Prime Ministers under whom he has served, have busied themselves during these years, in which Mr. MacDonald and Mr. Clynes have complained that the British Empire has hardly counted in the world. One remembers the "Three Nations" cartoons of Max Beerbohm, in which, most of the time, the French and Germans were fighting each other, whilst John Bull was piling up his wealth.

American Imperialism in the Near East.

Before the war the United States was practically self-sufficing in raw material; its exports consisted mainly of food stuffs and raw material, and America was a debtor, not a creditor nation.

The war, and with it the great acceleration of American industrial development, have changed all this. The United States now import raw material and export manufactured articles on a large scale, and America has become one of the great creditor nations. American business men are concerned about the foreign control of rubber, nitrates, chrome and petroleum. They are stretching out all over the world for raw materials for markets, and for opportunities for the profitable investment of capital. All these are to be found in the Near East.

In the spring of 1920 the Government of the United States was engaged in a controversy with the British Government regarding the right of American capital to participate in the oil resources of Mesopotamia.

SPICE.

"I would like to tender my humble sympathy to the Chancellor of the Duchy. It is almost pathetic to find the labourer of the first hour grudged the penny which is so lavishly bestowed upon the Noble Lords who hardly arrived in the field in time to take part in the distribution."—Mr. Austin Chamberlain in the House of Commons.

* * *

NON-CO-OPERATION PROGRESS.

The Municipal Corporation of Bombay is issuing tender forms asking contractors to note that no articles manufactured in the British Empire outside India will be used in the municipal departments.

TO IRISH COMRADES.

To the Editor, "Workers' Dreadnought."

Dear Comrade,

When James Larkin returned to Ireland from the U.S.A., a rally of the social revolutionary elements in that country commenced, partly because of his advent, more particularly for other reasons explained by the recent developments of public affairs. Larkin and others began The Irish Workers' League, a body whose manifesto is content with deciding in favour of a Workers' Republic based on the common ownership of the land and agents of production and its application to supply the needs of the whole community. The League as well as its principles, are embrionic. It marks, however, a re-forming of the working class revolutionary ranks and rise of the corresponding idea to the domination of Irish politics. It may lead to the final revolutionary Communist movement when it is really formed. Fortunately, it is quite free from the Labour Party and has not approached any International.

I desire to receive the co-operation of all real Communists with Irish connections in order to open a branch in London.

Contact has already been achieved with U.S.A., and we hope to form auxiliary bodies to the one in Ireland, wherever there are sufficient Irish exiles or their descendants abroad. These would render particular assistance to the home movement, e.g. by raising money for urgent purposes—at the present time for the 50,000 dependents of the prisoners in the anti-Imperialist class wars—by providing sympathisers of all nationalities with the truth about Ireland, and on occasion, by acting as the promoters of mass movements to aid the fight in Ireland. In 1921-22 the "Settlement" would never have been rammed down the throats of the Irish people but for the millions of money and the vast quantity of munitions supplied to the renegades by the British Government. The Irish in Britain should have begun a 'Hands off Ireland' movement amongst the workers to prevent what happened. This was not done, and most even of the class conscious, do not know to this day how the two Empire States were ever established in Ireland. If ever the British Government interferes directly with Irish affairs, the League would immediately stimulate the creation of such "Hands off Ireland" Committees.

We hope to organise to convert the mass of Irish workers here to Communism, a task which we could undertake far more successfully than any ordinary Communist body; and an obligation would rest on all our members to take their due part in the international movement, according to their conception of their duty, in whatever country they may inhabit.

We should introduce to the whole working class movement the new art that has arisen in the Irish revolutionary outburst, eliminating undesirable features. There has taken place a revival of the culture that once prevailed in ancient Ireland, the society of which was in fundamentals, communistic and anarchistic, to a degree of which most English workers are unaware. This revival therefore breathes a spirit in harmony with our views on the future. This rebirth has taken place in a revolutionary atmosphere and from the subject class..

To keep this effort on the right lines we require the right people. Will any of your members willing to lend a hand—and this would not require very much of their spare time—please communicate with me?

c/oI.S.L.C.,
Gladstone Hall, New Cross Road,
New Cross, S.E.

Those of Irish blood would be more adaptable, of course. Later on, when events progress in Ireland, there will be work for all and sundry in the "Hands off Ireland" movement to save the Irish Communist Revolution.

I am, Yours fraternally,
W. Robinson,
Temp. Hon. Org. Sec.
I.W.L.

THE TIME FOR SOLIDARITY.

Now is the time to show solidarity, fellow workers, now that comrades are on strike.

Now is the time to show you believe in "one big union."

Mr. Jack Jones, M.P., says you should, and if you were there you certainly cheered that sentiment, fellow worker.

But you and I have had too much sentiment, fellow workers. What we require is action. If we fail to act, we must not complain that others fail also.

The dockers are starving; their leaders are making speeches. The Labour Government has set up a Court of Inquiry.

What sort of a Court is it, fellow workers?

It consists of one Trade Unionist, one Liberal K.C., and one representative of an Employers' Federation.

The balance will be two to one against the dockers, fellow workers.

Is that the sort of Court you expected the Labour Government to set up?

Do not be surprised, fellow workers. That is tactics, statesmanship, political wisdom.

The Court of Inquiry is only camouflage. It will not help the dockers. If they have shown that they know how to help themselves, the Court of Inquiry may agree to let them keep some of what they have won by their own efforts.

Where shall the dockers look for help, fellow workers?

Not to the employers, not to the Court of Inquiry.

To you, fellow workers, they can only look to you for support.

How can you help them?

You may subscribe your pennies to the strike funds, but that will not help much.

Solidarity is your only great means to help the dockers.

The sympathetic strike, the general strike, the one Big Union, are the practical means of showing solidarity.

Form the one Big Union.

What sort of one Big Union?

The All-Workers Union of Workshop Committees, the best form of one Big Union yet devised.

THE SEARCHLIGHT.

COMMUNIST WORKERS' MOVEMENT.

Meetings.

Sundays, 3 p.m., Hyde Park. N. Smyth and others.

Sunday, March 2nd. 7.30 p.m. Hamilton Hall, 375, High Road, Willesden Green. Sylvia Pankhurst and others.

A LITERATURE PITCH.

Comrade Mrs. Ironside is organising a literature selling pitch in Oxford Street. Comrades willing to assist are asked to communicate with the "Dreadnought" office in order that we may forward their names to her.

Read EIRE The Irish Nation
Weekly Review of Irish Republican Opinio
PRICE TWOPENCE
On Sale Saturdays

CLERIAL WORK.

Volunteers are needed for Clerical and Organising work. Comrades should write to the "Dreadnought" office.

THE "ONE BIG UNION BULLETIN"

The One Big Union seeks to organise the workers on class lines. Read about it.
10/- per year; 5/- six months.
Plebs Buildings, 54 Adelaide Street, Winnipeg, Canada.

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